

## Networking in Business and Science: Advancing Your Career with Small Talk

*“Do I really have to talk about the weather? If I can talk about science, why do I need to be able to make small talk?”*

Being able to confidently make conversation can play a significant role in advancing your career, whether you work in business, industry or academia. Scientists often find themselves in professional situations where less structured conversations take place, such as between sessions at conferences, at meetings with project partners or working groups, or during breaks with colleagues and co-workers. These more informal conversations in a professional context can lead to new insights and perspectives, development of interesting projects, or opportunities for future collaboration. If you don't know how to start up conversations in these situations -and keep them going- you may find yourself sitting awkwardly in silence or embarrassing yourself instead of taking advantage of these opportunities to expand your professional network, establish new connections within your scientific community, and deepen existing relationships, not to mention enjoy a pleasant conversation with someone who likely has shared interests.

However, for many people, making small talk is easier said than done. They don't know what to talk about, what *not* to talk about, how to strike up a conversation, and how to bridge those awkward silences that sometimes occur.

In this interactive workshop, you will learn and practice the art of making small talk so that you can master spontaneous conversations in any setting.

### Topics

- Starting conversations and keeping them going with ease
- Acceptable topics for small talk
- Avoiding “conversation killers” and taboo topics
- Talking about your work to different kinds of people
- Introducing yourself professionally and introducing people to each other

### Methods

Individual work, partner and small group exercises, group discussion, role plays with feedback and coaching, interactive presentation. This course will be held in English.

### Important

Participants are expected to complete a pre-seminar assignment.

### Notice

In the current programme you will find a second networking topic: “Networking in Business and Science: Conferences, Contacts & Connections”. While it is recommended to attend both workshops, they are nevertheless independent of each other.

